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the total exhaustion will take place in four hundred years ; and arrives at the conclusion that the time may be even less than that given by the Commission. That the day of complete depletion will come, the author is assured, and when it does come "the historian of a powerful empire will terminate, very probably, the narrative of a remarkable epoch with these words, *finis Britannae*." W. N. LOGAN.

Cape Nome Gold Region. By FRANK C. SCHRADER and ALFRED H. BROOKS. United States Geological Survey, Special Report, 56 pp. Washington, 1900.

The Cape Nome gold field which has recently occasioned so much excitement is of special interest geologically on account of being the most noteworthy modern beach placers known. The type of ore deposits to which these Alaskan beds belong has long been recognized, but no bodies of this kind have ever proved so rich. Ancient deposits of the same origin are not unknown. Such are the Witwatersrand blanket of the Transvaal and the Napoleon Creek conglomerate in Alaska.

The Nome district is on the southern shore of the Seward peninsula in a little known part of northwestern Alaska. "The beach rises gradually to a sharply cut bench, a hundred to two hundred yards from the surf. From the edge of this terrace, which is about twenty feet high, the moss-covered tundra extends inland, rising uniformly about two hundred feet in four or five miles, when it merges into the highland belt."

The bed-rock of the region is composed of limestones and phyllites or mica schists interbedded, with some gneiss. Igneous rock is of rare occurrence. Over this foundation lie the unconsolidated gravels with gold-bearing zones. The authors emphasize the fact that during the deposition of the gravels and sands the conditions were not materially different from those of today, except that the land stood at a lower elevation relatively to the sea. "There is no evidence whatever of glacial action in the region, and the popular idea that the gravels were brought to their present position by ice action is entirely erroneous."

The gold-bearing deposits are grouped into gulch-placers, bar-placers, beach-placers, tundra-placers, and bench-placers. The gulch and beach placers are the most productive. During the past year (1899) the production was three million dollars.

The gold is usually rounded and often smoothly polished. It is not evenly distributed through the gravels but gathered in zones. In

washing the pay-streaks the heavy minerals garnet and magnetite are concentrated along with the gold. The first forms "ruby sand" and the latter "black sand."

Good prospects for gold occur in many other places in the Seward peninsula. "The geographic portions of some of the different localities suggest that they may belong to the same gold belt. The facts known to us, however, are not sufficient to prove this; and it must simply be regarded as a working hypothesis. Should subsequent development and investigation show that the gold of all of these districts of Seward peninsula is derived from the same series of rocks, this gold-mining region will embrace an area of at least 5000 to 6000 square miles. If this proves to be the case, it does not by any means follow that the entire belt will contain workable gold deposits. We should rather expect to find the gold confined to certain zones within the belt."

The report is accompanied by a number of excellent views of the region. This preliminary report gives us a good idea of just what the visitors and prospectors may expect when they reach the Cape Nome region. Scientists will await the appearance of the final report with interest.

C. R. KEYES.

Syllabus of Economic Geology. By JOHN C. BRANNER, Ph.D., and JOHN F. NEWSOM, A.M., Second Edition, 1900, pp. 368. Plates and Diagrams.

This volume is a syllabus of a course of lectures on economic geology given by the authors at Leland Stanford Junior University. It is intended primarily for the student, but will also be found a most valuable guide to anyone interested in the various branches of economic geology. It begins with a general list of the more important works on economic geology, and of the periodicals relating to this subject. After this are a few introductory remarks on geology in its relation to various economic subjects, including mining, agriculture, forestry, manufacturing, industries, art, roads, railways, migration, etc., followed by a brief synopsis of geological sections, maps, surveys, etc., from an economic standpoint; a summary of economic geological products and their various classifications as proposed by different authors; rock-cavities; the formation of ore bodies; and the features of ore deposits. This general part of the subject takes up the first fifty pages, and most of the rest of the volume treats of different kinds of ore deposits and